

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, in light of the present amendments and following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 7-10 are pending. Claims 1-6 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Support for newly added Claim 7 can be found in original Claims 1-3 and in Fig. 4, for example. Support for newly added dependent Claim 8 can be found in Fig. 5, for example. Support for newly added Claims 9 and 10 can be found in Fig. 5, for example. No new matter is added.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1, 2, 4, and 5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Nissan Diesel Motor Co., Ltd. (Japanese Patent No. 017083/1980, herein "Nissan"). Claims 3 and 6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over Nissan.

Regarding the rejection of Claims 1-6 over Nissan, Applicants respectfully submit that as Claims 1-6 are canceled, the rejection is negated.

Newly added independent Claim 7 recites, in part:

a recess on the inner peripheral surface of the valve guide, said recess extending downwardly from an upper end of the valve guide along the stem of the valve so as to form a clearance between the valve guide and the stem of the valve, and

an engagement groove formed on an outer periphery of the valve guide for engagement with a stem seal to prevent intrusion of oil,

the recess on the valve guide having a lower end lower in position than a thinnest portion of the valve guide, the thinnest portion of the valve guide corresponding to a location of the engagement groove such that the thinnest portion and the engagement groove have a same position relative to an axial direction defined by an axis of the valve guide.

Accordingly, an engagement groove is formed on an outer periphery of the valve guide. A recess on the valve guide has a lower end lower in position than the thinnest portion of the

valve guide. The thinnest portion of the valve guide corresponds to a location of the engagement groove along an axis of the valve guide. In other words, the engagement groove and thinnest portion of the valve guide overlap each other.

In contrast, Nissan merely describes a tapered portion (2a) that extends from an opening of the valve stem guide (2) toward a central part of the valve stem (2). Nissan, as noted in the outstanding Office Action at page 3, does not disclose an engagement groove formed on an outer periphery of the valve guide. Therefore, Nissan does not teach or suggest **any particular relationship between the non-existent engagement groove and lower end of a recess** on the inner peripheral surface of the valve guide as recited in newly added independent Claim 7. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that newly added Claim 7 patentably distinguishes over Nissan for at least the reasons discussed above.

Newly added dependent Claim 9 recites:

The valve guide structure according to claim 8, wherein the recess includes an untapered section between the taper and the upper end.

Accordingly, the recess includes an untapered section between the taper and the upper end of the valve guide. In contrast, as shown in Fig. 3, Nissan describes a continuously tapered recess (2a) extending from an end of the valve guide (2) toward an interior of the valve guide (2). Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that Nissan fails to teach or suggest the features of newly added dependent Claim 9.

Newly added dependent Claim 10 recites:

The valve guide structure according to claim 9, wherein the untapered section has a same position in the axial direction as the engagement groove.

Accordingly, the untapered section has a same position along the axis of the valve guide as the engagement groove.

As discussed above, Nissan does not teach or suggest an engagement groove, much less a specific position of the engagement groove relative to an untapered section of a recess. Indeed, Nissan does not teach or suggest an untapered section of a recess. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that newly added dependent Claim 10 patentably distinguishes over Nissan for at least the additional reasons discussed above.

Consequently, in light of the above discussion and in view of the present amendment, the present application is believed to be in condition for allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,  
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.



Gregory J. Maier  
Attorney of Record  
Registration No. 25,599

Customer Number

**22850**

Tel: (703) 413-3000  
Fax: (703) 413 -2220  
(OSMMN 03/06)

Lee L. Stepina  
Registration No. 56,837